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VII. HOUSES AND FAMILIES.

*659 ● 592 **58. Definition of House.**—There are two different definitions of the term 'House' and the Provincial Superintendents of Census are allowed the option of choosing either of the two. According to the one—

(a) The house is defined as "the enclosure or residence of one or more families having a separate entrance from the common way".

This further requires the term "Family" to be defined, as in the house lists the name of the head of each family has to be recorded as it is from him that the enumerator has to obtain the whole information for filling in the Census schedule. According to the second definition—

(b) The house is the "dwelling place of a commensal family with its resident dependents such as widows, mistresses and servants".

The idea of commensality or eating from the common hearth or "chula" is thus the main criterion for determining a house and not the enclosure or homestead. The first treats the wooden or mud structure as the unit irrespective of the number of families residing therein. Such a definition might be suitable for cities and towns for purposes of municipal taxation but is defective for the requirements of the Census where the family or the social household and not the mere building constitutes the more convenient unit, as the family furnishes better guidance for the formation of blocks and calculating the number of Census schedules and other forms needed by each enumerator. The former definition of entrance from a common way was of universal vogue until the 1901 Census but has gradually given place to the commensal definition which is at present followed by a majority of provinces with the exception of Madras and Central Provinces which seem to stick to the structural definition.

Like the previous Censuses the commensal definition which seems to be best fitted for the conditions of the State has been adopted at the current Census also. The house-numbering was carefully checked and every precaution was taken to see that no house, shed or homestead was left without a number. Not only were the structural houses given a number but every cart-stand on the roadside or halting place in the open where there could be a likelihood of any person staying overnight was provided with a house-number and included in the regular Census block of the enumerator. Inspections were conducted by the Census Commissioner in the Jammu Province while the Assistant Census Commissioner was deputed to carry out inspections in the tehsils of the Kashmir Province. The mistakes found were circulated to all the Census Agency for guidance and thus sufficient degree of accuracy may be attached to the statistics collected which can be considered as reliable.

*162 The total number of occupied houses as computed from the Census schedules comes to 6,71,638 against 5,99,287 in 1921, which gives a total increase of 72,351 houses in the State during the decade and a percentage increase of 12·7. The number of houses at the 1911 and 1901 and 1891 Censuses stood at 5,53,124, 4,64,635 and 4,47,993 respectively and the percentage increase between 1891-1901 comes to 4 per cent., between 1901-1911, 19 per cent. and between 1911-1921, 8·3 per cent. From these figures it will be clear that the increase in the number of occupied houses during the current decade is very satisfactory being 12·7 per cent. i. e., almost 1½ times the increase registered by the preceding Census. The increase has also been much higher than the percentage increase in population which is 9·8 per cent. only. This affords another proof of the extraordinary favourable conditions of the decade which were highly conducive to the material well-being and prosperity of the people. Taking a longer view of things it will be

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found Gut during the last forty years, from 1891 till 1931, while the population has increased by 43 per cent. the number of houses has also kept not 162
only steady pace therewith but has actually exceeded the proportion the increase being 49·9 per cent. or say 50 per cent. The highest increase in the number of houses has taken place in the Kashmir Province which records a rise of 57·1 per cent. over the last decade, the Frontier Districts follow with an increase of 11·3 per cent. and Jammu Province showing only 0·6 per cent. increase. The higher increase in Kashmir Province is due to the high rate of increase of the Kashmir population as compared to Jammu, which during the last 40 years has only increased by 24 per cent. against 65 per cent. increase of Kashmir Province during the same period. This reveals a close correspondence between the increase in the number of houses and in population.

A novel feature of the present Census was the carrying out of permanent house-numbering in the cities of Jammu and Srinagar which was done 342
by affixing iron plates bearing house-numbers on the doors of houses which 361
besides serving the purposes of Census will prove of great utility to the Municipalities, Electric and Postal Departments.

87. **Variation in the size of house-hold.**—The marginal table shows for the whole State the number of persons per house as also the average number of houses per square mile at each of the five Censuses commencing with the Census of 1891, while the Subsidiary Table VII of this chapter contains the figures for each of the natural divisions.

Census	Persons per house	Houses per square mile
1891 –	6	6
1901 –	6	6
1911 –	6	6
1921 –	6	7
1931 –	6	8

It is apparent that in the present decade the number of houses per square mile has increased from 7 to 8 i. e., by 14 per cent. which no doubt presents a satisfactory improvement in the building activities. The area of the State being much larger in proportion to its population the figure of 8 houses per square mile represents an exceedingly low density of inhabited houses as compared with other parts of India. The house density of the Baroda State at the current Census comes to 60 houses per square mile while that of All India stands at 317 in 1921, and consequently the comparative position of this State in respect of houses per square mile, is an inferior one. The increase has been the highest in the Jhelum Valley Division which shows an improvement of 19·2 per cent. over the past decade, the Sub-mountane and Outer-Hills following in descending order of 9·3 per cent. and 9·2 per cent. and the Indus Valley registering no improvement at all.

From Subsidiary Table VII, it will appear that the average number of persons per house in the entire State has dwindled from 6 to 5 i. e., by 20 per cent. which would represent an abnormal reduction in the size of the family but in reality this is not the true state of affairs as in the calculations the decimal figures have been altogether left out of account, quantities above ·5 being taken as full numbers and below ·5 being omitted. The actual figures show that the number of persons has really decreased from 5·5 in 1921 to 5·4 in 1931 which shows a decrease of 1·8 per cent., a very negligible difference practically pointing to the conclusion that the size of the family is steady or has grown smaller by an inappreciable degree. The internal natural divisions show that there has been no change either in the Semi-mountainous Tract, the Outer-Hills or the Jhelum Valley Division.

88. **The Family.**—The "Family" for Census purposes was understood to 592
consist of persons who usually lived and dined together with their resident 659
dependents, but the definition is not complete as there may be certain families whose members on the Census night might be residing and dining elsewhere and might have escaped registration. Similarly on the Census night certain families from different localities may be residing together in a

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...wife, sister, or Divorcée at home and count as one family. But as already discussed, the movement of people in the State being limited, no great changes are likely to be anticipated in the number of families, and the Census figures may safely be taken to represent a family.

[163] The total number of married females aged 15-45 comes to 6,48,177 and acting on the assumption that each such female aged 15-45 represented a family, in view of the fact that the population of the State was predominantly Muhammadan, who are not generally used to the Joint Family System, the correspondence between the number of such families and the Census house would appear to be remarkable. The excess of 23,467 houses would partly be explained by the large number of shops, temporary sheds and huts where only a single person was present on Census night having been treated as a separate house and partly by other reasons.